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NOTICES FROM THE LICK OBSERVATORY.

Prepared by Members of the Staff.

The Observatory of Nice.*

The accompanying cuts are copied from Lieutenant Winterhalter's Report on European Observatories, by the kind permission of the Superintendent of the U. S. Naval Observatory (*See* Publ. A. S. P., vol. III, page 40). The short description here given is condensed from that of Lieutenant Winterhalter and from other sources.

The Observatory is situated on the brow of Mt. Gros, an hour's drive from Nice, at an altitude of about 1100 feet above the sea.

The institution has been built and equipped (and is, I believe, maintained) at the expense of M. R. L. Bischoffsheim, a banker of Paris, who has also made many liberal gifts to other observatories in France. His gifts to the Nice Observatory alone have amounted to something over $1,000,000.

The cut shows the Observatory buildings on the plateau of Mt. Gros. The small house in the left foreground is the pavilion for magnetic observations. The Great Dome for the Equatorial of 30 inches aperture and 59 feet focus is next to this, and the gas-works are directly in the rear. The three buildings on the artificial terrace, faced with stone, in the foreground, are the quarters for the astronomers and the library (in the centre). Next to the Great Dome (of which another full-page cut is given) is the Meridian-Circle House, next to this, the Transit House, and next to this, the Laboratory. The Dome for the 15-inch equatorial comes next. Other buildings are in course of construction, one of which is to contain a heliometer, and another a photographic equatorial.

The Dome rests on a square structure about 87 feet on a side and about 30 feet in height. Within this square structure is a stone cylinder which supports the Dome itself. The Dome weighs about 100 tons and is about 74 feet in diameter (that is, it is of essentially the same dimensions as the Dome at Mount Hamilton). The cost of the metallic part of the Dome was about $40,000 (that of the Lick Observatory, which is of about the same dimensions, was about $53,000). The design is due to M. EIFFEL, who has introduced at least one decided novelty. The Dome can be made to revolve on a live-ring of the GRUBB system (like that at the Lick Observatory) and it can also be raised off the wheels of this live-ring and have its entire weight supported by a hollow metal tank floating in another tank, which is intended to contain a non-freezing mixture. The printed accounts describe the working of this Dome as highly satisfactory. It may be of interest to add here that the Dome at Mount Hamilton has been in constant use since July, 1888, and that not a single night's observation has been lost through any stoppage for repairs or adjustments to the Dome or shutters.

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* M. Perrotin, Director.

The Nice Observatory is magnificently equipped with equatorials of 30 and 15-inch aperture (objectives by the MM. HENRY of Paris) with a fine meridian circle by MM. BRUNNER frères, etc., etc. It is no part of the plan of this brief note to describe the admirable observations and memoirs which have already come from the Observatory of Nice. A note on the latest volume issued will be found in these *Publications* vol. III, page 45.

The Observatory is, with the exception of that of Pulkowa, the best equipped in Europe; and it should not be forgotton that it is the gift of a single individual, to whom science owes a great debt.

E. S. H.

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS WRITTEN BY GEORGE P. BOND OF HARVARD COLLEGE OBSERVATORY, 1857-1860.*

SEPTEMBER 28, 1857.

To G. B. AIRY, Astronomer Royal.

* * * * "My father† requests your acceptance of the enclosed plate exhibiting a line photographed by α *Lyræ*, as it passed the field of the equatorial by its diurnal motion, the telescope remaining fixed. You will perceive that your idea for the self-registration of transits and zenith distances can be perfectly realized for this particular star.

"You will notice considerable fluctuations in the intensity and regularity of the line, to be ascribed partly to changes of refraction,

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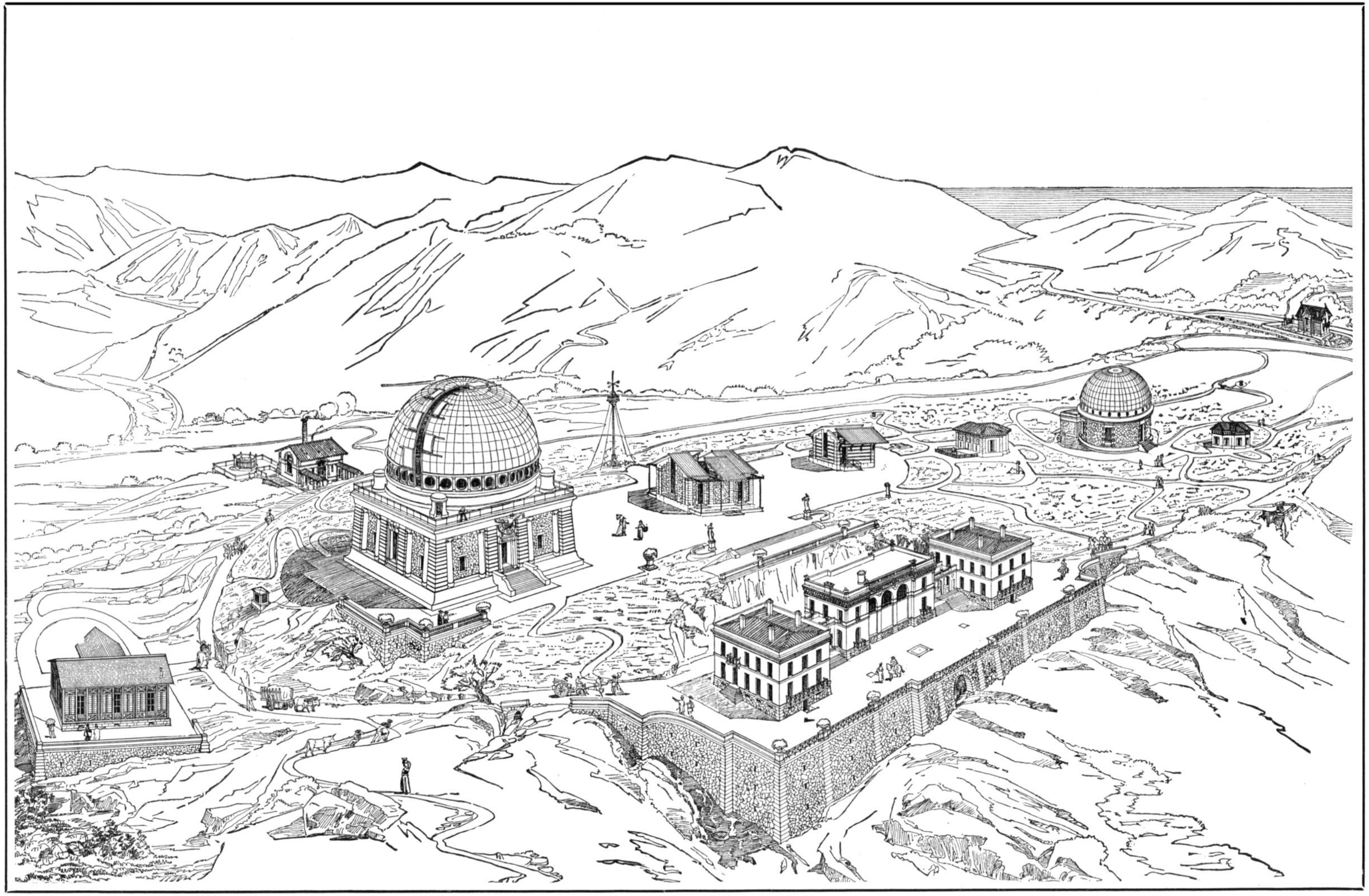
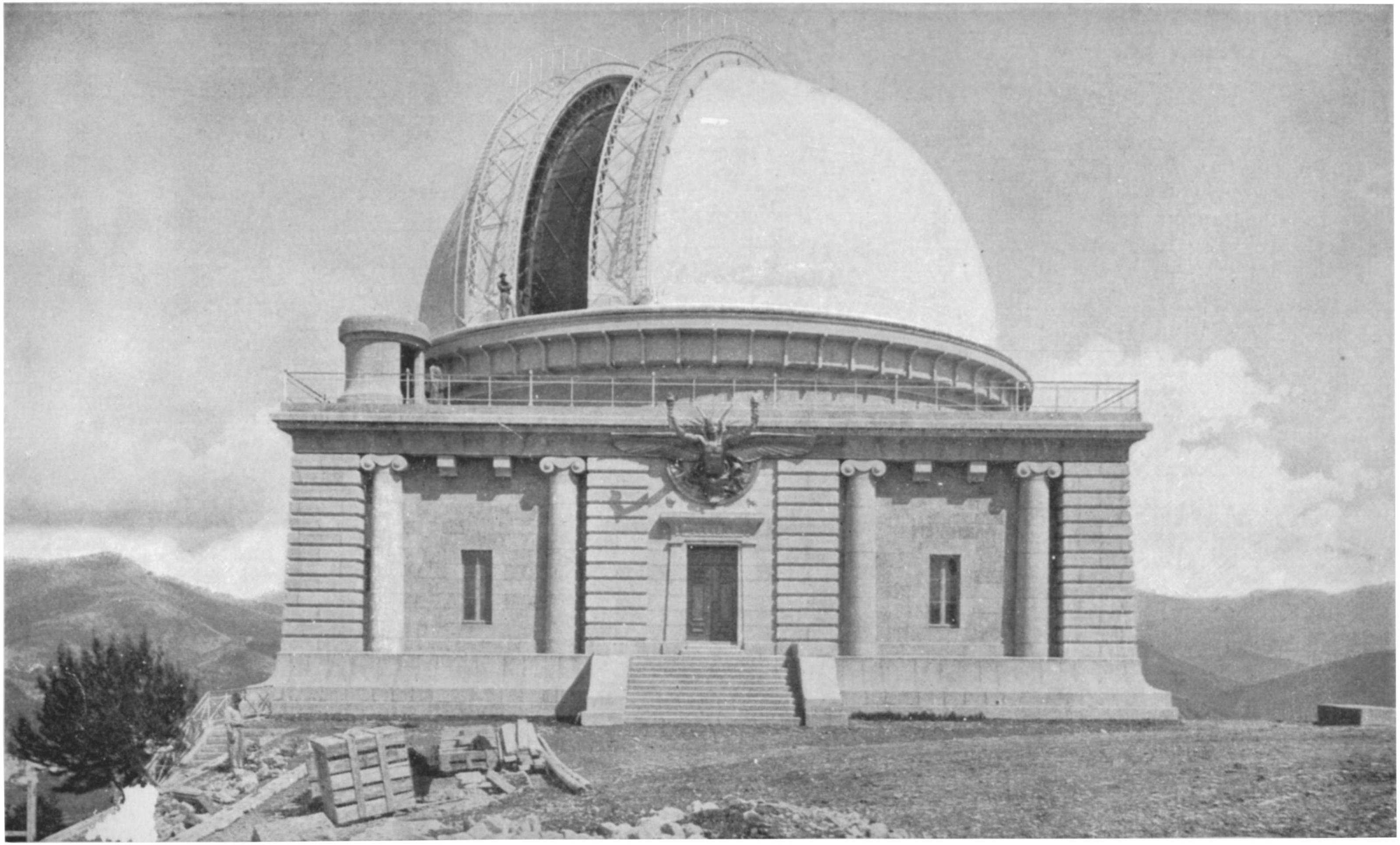
* Kindly communicated by his daughters, Miss ELIZABETH and MISS CATHARINE BOND of Cambridge, Massachusetts.

† *i. e.* Professor WILLIAM CRANCH BOND, then Director H. C. O.



GENERAL VIEW OF THE OBSERVATORY OF NICE



GREAT DOME OF THE OBSERVATORY OF NICE.